

Oatlands Historic District (Church of Our Savior)
U. S. Rt. 15
Leesburg vicinity
Loudoun County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-949-L

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54-LEESV,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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OATLANDS HISTORIC DISTRICT, CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOR HABS No. VA-949-L

Location: U.S. Rt. 15, Leesburg vicinity, Loudoun County, Virginia.

Owner: Diocese of Virginia (Episcopal)
110 West Franklin Street
Richmond, Virginia

Use: Church.

Significance: A small, simple ecclesiastical structure, still in its pristine, pastoral setting.

PART I. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Detailed Description of Interior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 23'-0" x 33'-0" with a 12'-0" wide wing on the south.
2. Number of stories: One.
3. Lay-out, shape: The original building consisted of a rectangular nave with a smaller rectangular chancel on the east. The east wall of the chancel has been extended southward to form a choir room. A smaller furnace room has also been added on the north, in the angle between the nave and chancel.
4. Foundations: The rubble stones of the foundation wall are dressed to a relatively smooth face and extend to the window sills. A bead of mortar has been applied across the irregular-sized stones to simulate regular coursing.
5. Wall construction, finish, color: The red brick walls begin at the stone foundation with a header every sixth course. The west gable wall incorporates a brick cross, approximately five feet high, in the brick coursing. Walls of the later choir room are brick and walls of the furnace room lean-to on the north are concrete block, painted dusty rose.
6. Structural system, framing: Not visible, but assumed to be wood.
7. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: A concrete stoop with two risers leads up to the wooden sill of the entrance door on the west. A concrete stoop, one riser high, is located at the doorway in the west wall of the choir room. There is a small fragment of a stone formed into two steps, which stands against the south wall of the nave.

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8. Chimneys: A tall, slender brick chimney is located on the east wall of the nave. A similar, but lower, chimney is on the southeast corner of the choir room.
9. Openings:
 - a. Doors, doorways: The entrance on the west consists of two wooden doors, each with two vertical recessed panels. The entrance is framed by a simple pedimented frontispiece attached to the face of the brick wall. The undecorated entablature is supported by two wooden, three-quarter Tuscan columns on a low, modern brick plinth. The raking cornice is formed by simple large-scaled crown moldings. A scrolled iron bracket, possibly for a lantern, is attached to the plain tympanum. The doors and frontispiece are painted white. The door to the choir room is wooden, and has two vertical recessed panels above and below a central horizontal panel. This door is also white. The flat trim within the reveal is painted dark green. The white-painted door to the furnace room contains two panels. Its flat wooden reveal is also painted dark green.
 - b. Windows and shutters: All windows in the nave are double-hung, with nine-over-nine lights, 12" x 20", except for a leaded, stained-glass window on the east wall behind the altar; the circular head of this window is set in a brick arch. All other lintels are flat radiating brick arches. There are fixed louvered shutters at all windows except for the stained-glass window and the windows on the north wall. In the latter case, louvers have been replaced by solid panels. The windows in the choir room are also double-hung with six-over-six lights, 9-1/4" x 13-1/4", with louvered shutters. All shutters are painted dark green.
10. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Roofs over the nave, the chancel and the choir room are gabled with wooden shingles. The lean-to has a shingled, shed roof.
 - b. Cornice: There is a narrow crown-mold cornice, painted dark green. The eaves have a slight overhang.
 - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: At the extreme west end of the roof, over the entrance doorway, is a low, open belfry. It consists of four square posts supporting an arched wood lintel. Its hipped roof is shingled and surmounted by a wooden cross. The tower and the cross are painted dark green.

B. Detailed Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plan: The church is entered through a small narthex which projects into the nave at its west end. An enclosed stairway with winders is located at the north side of the narthex, and leads to a rear gallery with a sloping floor. The rear gallery is supported by two slender Tuscan columns resting directly on the floor without a plinth. At the east end of the nave is a rectangular chancel, 9'-0" wide, with a plastered barrel vaulted ceiling. The floor of the chancel is two risers above the main floor. The altar, which is up another riser, is enclosed by a wooden altar rail. A doorway on the south wall of the chancel leads to the choir room on the south.
2. Stairways: The stairway has fourteen risers and is enclosed by beaded vertical boards. The treads are wider after they clear the projecting foundation wall on the interior.
3. Flooring: All floors are wood. The widest boards are found in the gallery.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The foundation wall, which projects five inches into the interior, is faced with a vertical wooden wainscot and shelf, painted white. Walls and ceiling are smooth plaster. The nave walls are painted white, all other surfaces are painted light green.
5. Doorways and doors: The entrance doors and all window openings are set without trim in plastered reveals. The door to the choir room is similar to the exterior door in that room. It should be noted that wood trim at the openings in the choir room are similar to the trim in the drawing room at Oatlands, including the bullseye corner blocks.
6. Special decorative features, trim, and cabinet work: The arched opening into the chancel is simply handled with a white flat wood banding applied to the face of the plastered wall and projecting slightly beyond. Simplified Doric pilasters resting on the wainscot shelf, frame the opening. Edges of the pilasters and the arched trim are chamfered. A wooden keystone is applied at the crown of the arch.
7. Notable hardware: None.
8. Mechanical equipment: There is a central heating system with convectors in the floor. There is no trace of an earlier system. There is no plumbing. There is a single black metal chandelier with crystal prisms in the nave. It appears to have been adapted from a gas chandelier.

C. Site:

1. General setting: The church is on a low grassy knoll approximately in the center of the grounds. These are enclosed by a white picket fence on the west, a rail fence on the south and east, and a wire fence on the north boundary. There is a row of large trees bordering the fence on the west and a row of trees parallel to the church on the south. North of the church are several tombstones. Beyond, at the wire fence, is a thicket of trees and bushes.
2. Historic landscape design: Possibly the row of trees adjacent to the church on the south.
3. Outbuildings: There is a wooden parish hall in the southeast corner of the property. It was given by Mr. and Mrs. William Corcoran Eustis of Oatlands in the twentieth century.

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken through the joint efforts and financing of HABS and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Of particular value was the advice and cooperation of E. Blaine Cliver, Historical Architect, and Thomas M. Slade, Architectural Historian, both of the National Trust. This report was prepared by Woodrow W. Wilkins, AIA, Supervisory Architect, HABS Oatlands project, during the summer of 1973.